

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the latest edition of the Police and Crime Commissioners' Treasurers Society newsletter, produced by the Technical Support Team.

The newsletter provides details of major announcements and consultations relevant to police finance, as well as a summary of recent news stories affecting police and local government.

Further news articles of relevance to members, Finance Update Reports presented at PACCTS meetings and member briefings detailing funding developments and announcements can be found on the [PACCTS website](#).

For further information please follow the links provided, or contact the Technical Support Team via the details at the bottom of each page.

Please click on the appropriate heading to be taken straight to the relevant part of the newsletter.

- [Major Announcements](#)
- [Consultations](#)
- [Publications](#)
- [News Articles](#)
 - [Economy and Public Finance](#)
 - [Recruitment and Retention](#)
 - [Police Finances](#)
 - [Police Demand](#)
 - [Police General](#)
 - [Technology](#)
 - [Prisons](#)
 - [Fire](#)

MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENTS

Part 2 of the Police and Crime Commissioner Review

On 27 July, the Home Office published the accompanying documents for Part 2 of the Police and Crime Commissioner Review. Part 1 of the review concluded on 16 March with a [statement](#) from Priti Patel, the Secretary of State for the Home Department.

The range of measures being brought forward include: ways to “*strengthen PCC accountability; improve [PCCs] transparency to the public; clarify the relationship between PCCs and chief constables; bring more consistency to the PCC role; raise professional standards; and improve the checks and balances currently in place*”. More will also be done to explain the role of PCCs and make their record on crime more transparent to the public through requiring PCCs to provide “*a narrative on their force’s performance against the Government’s crime measures, and Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) force performance reports*”.

Other outcomes included:

- The HO plan to consult on potential changes to the Policing Protocol Order 2011.
- The HO also plan to legislate to amend section 38 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011, to make the chief constable dismissal process more rigorous and transparent by requiring a PCC to give the chief constable written notice.
- The HO also plan to “seek to address” the HMICFRS recommendations included in its “[Leading Lights](#)” report.
- HO and LGA plan develop a good governance training package for police and crime panels.

Part 2 of the review, according to a [letter](#) sent to PCCs by Kit Malthouse, will further examine ways to strengthen and expand the PCC role “*with a focus on the tools and levers [needed] to enhance ... efforts to cut crime*”. More specifically, the letter states that the HO will:

- “*Work alongside the Ministry of Justice and Probation Service to examine the role of PCCs in offender management aligned to existing operating models.*”
- “*Consider the role of PCCs in the partnership landscape and assess whether their current set of tools and levers are sufficient to drive and co-ordinate local activity to reduce crime, combat drugs misuse and tackle anti-social behaviour. The Review will focus on Local Criminal Justice Boards, Community Safety Partnerships and Violence Reduction Units*”
- “*As previously announced during Part One, [The HO] will also bring forward a stakeholder consultation on giving a general power of competence to PCCs, as afforded to Local Authorities*”.

Additionally, the review will continue to build on work carried out in Part One of the review. The HO will therefore:

- “*Assess the Police and Crime Panel Model - specifically the potential benefits of independent members, identifying and securing the right skill sets and options to strengthen panel support.*”
- “*Consider whether the existing mechanisms for investigating complaints and allegations against PCCs are sufficient and examine the role of the IOPC in assessing criminal wrongdoings by PCCs and the issue of vexatious complaints.*”

- *Work with the Cabinet Office and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government to consider the merits and demerits of introducing recall for PCCs for very serious breaches of behaviour, including what might be a suitable trigger mechanism.*
- *Through Part Two of this Review and the upcoming Spending Review, the Home Office will examine how PCCs use data in holding Chief Constables to account for the efficient and effective delivery of policing services in their respective areas, including how data is fed into centrally-held databases and is utilised by the Home Office and relevant policing partners to reduce crime”.*

There will also be some collaborative working with the MOJ as the upcoming Victims’ Bill is considering the role of PCCs in enforcing Victims’ rights.

The APCC [wrote](#) to PCCs on 17 August asking for members to reply to a Call for Evidence to help shape the APCC response stating that *“a joint submission co-ordinated through the APCC will enable us to speak with one voice as PCCs on the future development of the role, and this will carry real weight in the review”*. The deadline for responses is on 17 September, with full details being available on the [APCC website](#).

PUBLICATIONS

Beating Crime Plan

Published: 27 July

The government released their “Beating Crime Plan” to *“make it plain that this Government is on the side of the law-abiding majority”* and set out ways they will deliver a shared vision of fewer victims, peaceful neighbourhoods and a safer country. The plan states that, despite crime falling in recent times, there has also been a worrying rises in some of the most *“destructive and devastating crimes”* such as homicide and knife crime with *“drugs playing a prominent role”*.

The plan will introduce some of the following measures in order to *“drive down crime”*. These include:

- Reconnecting the police with the public.
- Improving the responsiveness of local police to 101 and 999 calls.
- Intervening early to keep young people safe and away from violence.
- Investing over £45 million in specialist teams in both mainstream schools and Alternative Provision.
- Expanding our use of electronic monitoring.
- Trialling the use of alcohol tags.
- Encouraging prison leavers to turn their backs on crime by securing employment.
- Empowering the police to take more knives off the streets.
- Expanding the role for Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs).

These categories are explained in further detail on the government website.

 GOV Website: [Publication](#)

Making a difference: How fire and rescue services supported communities during the COVID-19 pandemic

Published: July

The National Fire Chiefs Council published a document outlining the areas in which the fire and rescue services provided support to their working partners during the pandemic. The document covers areas such as: helping vulnerable people, supporting health care providers, assisting the crooner, working with ambulance services, supporting in mass testing and vaccination.

 NFCC Website: [Report](#)

Domestic Abuse Bill 2020

Published: 3 March 2020

Updated: 28 July

On 28 July the government updated their Domestic Abuse 2020: factsheets page to include an additional 6 fact sheets, these were: [Tackling perpetrators](#), [Amendment to the controlling or coercive behaviour offence](#), [Section 91\(14\) barring orders](#), [Prohibition on charging for the provision of medical evidence of domestic abuse](#), [Strangulation and suffocation](#) and [Threats to disclose private sexual photographs and films](#).

A short summary briefing of the changes can be found below on the PACCTS website.

 PACCTS Website: [Summary](#)

 GOV Website: [Fact Sheets](#)

Crime Stats in England and Wales

Published: 22 July

On 22 July the ONS released their updated their series of "Crime in England and Wales" for the year ending March 2021. The ONS use data from police recorded crime and the new Telephone-operated Crime Survey. This survey also includes the impact of the pandemic on people's perceptions of crime.

Main Findings

- The Telephone Crime Survey for England and Wales (TCSEW) indicated a 35% increase in fraud and computer misuse offences compared with the year ending March 2019.
- Total crime (excluding fraud and computer misuse) decreased by 19% compared to the year ending March 2019. This was largely due to a decrease in theft offences of 20%.
- Despite the TCSEW indicating no change in the total number of violent incidents, the total number of victims of violent crime was down 28% over the previous year. This was due to falls in violent crimes in which the offender was a stranger.
- The number of Homicides decreased by 16% to 600 offences.
- There was a 14% fall in the number of recorded fire-arm incidents and a 15% fall in knife crime.

A full briefing was circulated to members and can be found at the link below. The briefing also contains additional statistics relating to drug crime and drug deaths. If any further analysis of these statistics is required, please contact the Technical Support Team.

 ONS Website: [Report](#)

 PACCTS Website: [Briefing](#)

Safety of Women at Night (SWAN)

Published: 21 July

On 21 July, Priti Patel, the Secretary of State, acting through the Neighbourhood Crime unit [published](#) an "intention" to make an amount up to £5 million available for the Safety of Women at Night. Of that £5m, £0.5m will be reserved to support successful areas as well as for evaluation and other delivery functions. The remaining £4.5m will be made available to Local Authorities, Police and Crime Commissioners and other stakeholders through bid submissions. This funding will sit alongside the £25m third round of the Safer Streets fund.

The funding will be granted during the 2021-22 financial year with a stipulation that all allocations must be spent by March 2022.

The deadline for bids passed on 1 September. The [supporting information](#) can be still be found on the [government website](#).

 GOV Website: [Publication](#)

CONSULTATIONS

OPEN

Home Office consultation into providing PCCs with General Powers of Competence (GPC)

Published: 1 September

Closes: 27 October

Following the conclusion of Part One of the PCC Review, the Home Secretary announced that the government would consult on giving enhanced powers of competence to PCCs in England and Wales. Currently, PCCs have a functional power of competence which enables them to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the exercise of their functions. However, the government believe that PCCs feel constrained because the existing powers limit their ability to undertake innovative activity, particularly where it might only be indirectly linked to policing.

This consultation is seeking views on the benefits and risks of giving PCCs (including Mayors with PCC functions) greater powers of competence to improve the levers they have to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour as well as giving them greater flexibility to drive efficiency.

The areas in which the government intends on expanding PC powers of competence include the following:

Putting beyond doubt their ability to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour

"Allowing PCCs to invest in activity that benefits the community and gets upstream of crime e.g. services to reduce offending, tackling mental health, youth diversion schemes"

Collaborative working

"The ability to take part in initiatives which are not current statutory responsibilities, for example with other emergency services or criminal justice partners; the opportunity to be a partner in local authority private sector commercial arrangements."

Property regeneration and development

"The ability to borrow to invest in regeneration of existing land and property; generating long-term revenue streams (rather than one-off capital receipts)."

Commercial ventures and initiatives

"The ability to develop innovative commercial opportunities, which yield additional revenue".

Additionally, the government are interested in views on the benefits, opportunities and risks of granting PCCs either

- a) *"a wider functional power of competence as held by fire and rescue authorities, which will include giving them the power to do anything indirectly incidental to their functions; **or***
- b) *a general power of competence as held by local authorities, which will give them the power to do anything that an individual can do so long as it is not prohibited by legislation."*

Any outcomes from this consultation would require primary legislation to provide PCCs with either a wider function or general power of competence. The government would seek to implement these measures through the next appropriate legislation vehicle following Part 2 of the PCC review. The intention is to provide both English and Welsh PCCs with the same wider power of competence.

The APCC circulated this consultation in order to seek views for their collaborative response. Should you want to contribute, please fill out the [questions form](#) provided to [James Sweetland](#) by 6 October.

 APCC Website: [Consultation](#)

 APCC Website: [Questions](#)

CLOSED

Consultation on allocation of £15 million to local bodies for audit outcome

Published: 20 April

Closed: 18 May

Response: 10 June

On 20 April the Government ran a [consultation](#) to support the Redmond review, specifically, the methodology for allocating £15 million to local bodies to help meet the anticipated rise in fees for 2020-21 audits.

The consultation stated that the increased fees will be driven by additional requirement on audits, including the NAO's "[Code of Audit Practice 2020](#)". Additionally, some of the money is also earmarked to enable local authorities to develop "standardised statements".

The favoured methodology put forward by government in the consultation was to "base individual allocations on each body's scale fee as a proportion of the total fee scale that each body currently pays as part of the current contracts". This would also include the relevant comparative fees for those who are not opted-in to the appointment body arrangements.

However, to be thorough, there were four other methodologies suggested, despite the government "not being minded" to take them forward. These included:

- “Allocating funding on the basis of a more standardised methodology that meant that all bodies of a specific ‘type’ received an equal allocation. **(a)**
- Taking into account past fee variations alongside base fee scales. **(b)**
- Providing equal allocations to all bodies, or another methodology that was not derived from the current fee scales. **(c)**
- Allocating a proportion of the £15 million as a fixed sum to all bodies and the remainder on a proportionate basis derived from the scale fees”. **(d)**

Jill Penn, on behalf of PACCTS, responded to the consultation. The PACCTS response agreed with the government favoured distribution method, suggesting that the proposal will make distributing the allocations straight forward, therefore enabling the grant to be distributed quickly. Furthermore, despite the other suggestions potentially being fairer, the actual differences that they would make to individual bodies would be relatively small. This could be countered by the additional costs of collecting the data as well as any implications of a potentially delayed payment.

Responses

There were 91 responses in total. The first question, relating to the favoured methodology (*to base individual allocations on each body’s scale fee as a proportion of the total fee scale that each body currently pays*), had majority support with 57% of responders agreeing. 32% disagreed whilst 11% said they were unsure.

For the question asking whether one of the methodologies proposed in paragraph 8 (found above) would be more equitable? 31% said yes with the breakdown as follows.

- 4% of respondents preferred methodology a
- 11% of respondents preferred methodology b
- 8% of respondents preferred methodology c
- 11% of respondents preferred methodology d
- 2% preferred a combination of methodologies a-d

Given that majority of respondents agreed with the proposed methodology to base individual allocations on each body’s scale fee as a proportion of the total fee scale, the government intends to allocate the £15 million funding across local bodies on this basis. Despite recognition “*that individual circumstances may vary*” the response states that it is important the methodology used follows a simple process that allows for efficient payments to be made to local bodies.

According to the consultation “*payments to local bodies will be made in due course*”. The Technical Support Team will update members on any progress.

 GOV Website: [Response](#)

NEWS ARTICLES

ECONOMY AND PUBLIC FINANCE

Chancellor launches vision for future public spending – Editors Pick

The Chancellor has launched Spending Review 2021 (SR21), which will conclude on 27 October 2021 alongside an Autumn Budget and set out the government's spending priorities for the Parliament.

The three-year review will set UK government departments' resource and capital budgets for 2022-23 to 2024-25 and the devolved administrations' block grants for the same period.

When added to what we have already provided to invest in our future, our plans – including the additional funding for health and social care announced on 7 September – mean core departmental spending will grow in real terms at nearly 4% per year on average over this Parliament. By 2024-25 that means that core departmental spending will be £140 billion more per year in cash terms than at the start of the Parliament.

 Please access the news article [here](#)

Government borrowing shrinks in July

Government borrowing fell in July compared with a year earlier as the removal of most Covid restrictions in England gave the economy a boost.

Borrowing was £10.4bn, official figures show, which was £10.1bn lower than July last year. However, the figure was the second-highest for July since records began.

 Please access the news article [here](#)

Tory cuts to English youth services fuelling crime, says Keir Starmer

Cuts to youth services in England amounting to £660m over the past decade have fuelled antisocial behaviour and violent crime, Keir Starmer will say.

The Labour leader said his experience as a former director of public prosecutions showed that youth workers, youth centres and other services aimed at young people were a key plank of early intervention against the causes of crime.

He highlighted analysis from the House of Commons library showing cuts to youth services in England since 2011 under successive Conservatives governments were steepest in the most deprived areas.

 Please access the news article [here](#)

Sunak pledges 'no return to austerity'

Chancellor Rishi Sunak has pledged there will be "absolutely no return to austerity" in the upcoming Spending Review, as the UK recovers from Covid-19.

The economy and public finances have experienced significant shock from the pandemic and will take time to fully recover, the chancellor told BBC's Newsnight programme.

He added that current government support will continue into the Spending Review, with strong investment in public services to help improve the NHS and police.

 Please access the news article [here](#)

Council tax 'scandal' sees people in deprived areas pay higher rates than London's wealthiest streets

People living in some of the poorest areas of the country are paying 20 times more council tax compared to the value of their property than homeowners on some of London's wealthiest streets.

Experts have slammed a "scandalous" north/south divide which sees residents in areas such as Hartlepool and Burnley pay around two per cent of the value of their property each year in council tax, whereas those living in Kensington and Westminster are charged just 0.1 per cent.

Analysis by "the i" shows the divide has grown wider since council tax was introduced in 1993, as cuts in local government funding have seen some authorities in some of the most deprived areas forced to raise the levy to fund local services.

 Please access the news article [here](#)

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

100 new PCSOs funded by Welsh Government

The Welsh Government have announced additional funding to provide a further 100 Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to tackle crime and support communities.

Wales' First Minister, Mark Drakeford, and the Welsh Government's Minister for Social Justice, Jane Hutt, have announced an extra £3.7m for additional PCSOs across Wales, bringing the total budget to over £22m.

 Please access the news article [here](#)

Chiefs order welfare checks for ex-Afghan conflict personnel

Welfare leads across the country have begun work to identify former Armed Services personnel who have been affected by the withdrawal of Allied troops from Afghanistan.

Force leaders have ordered check-ins with officers who joined up after serving in the Afghan conflict and may be experiencing mental health episodes as a result of the country's collapse.

Focus is on single crew officers on late shifts, people in high-pressure roles such as custody teams and those working in outlying stations.

 Please access the news article [here](#)

Policing degrees need to recognise existing experience while developing new skills and thinking

The requirement for UK police recruits to either be graduates or achieve a degree as part of their training is still a subject of much debate; but University of Sunderland lecturers Dr Jerry Pearson and Adrian Smiles – both former serving officers – believe one area of the PEQF that needs to be

addressed is delivering a degree qualification which recognises the skills and experience of those serving officers who are currently non-graduates.

🔗 Please access the news article [here](#)

POLICE FINANCES

Police fight plan to share cash with public services

Elected officials will be able to divert a police force's funding to other areas, such as mental health trusts, under a government proposal.

Ministers say it would let elected police and crime commissioners (PCCs) ease demand on policing by funding areas such as domestic abuse initiatives and specific NHS projects.

However, the plan prompted anger from police leaders who said forces were already underfunded and that it would be wrong for them to prop up struggling public services.

🔗 Please access the news article [here](#)

Actuaries call for economic growth link for public pension contributions

Currently, the discount rate used in the valuation of unfunded public service pension schemes to set employer contribution rates, is set at 2.4% above inflation.

However, in response to a consultation which concluded last week, pension body, the Association of Consulting Actuaries said the current methodology will "almost inevitably" overestimate or underestimate the value.

🔗 Please access the news article [here](#)

Police awarded £11.3m for programmes to prevent domestic abuse crimes

The Home Office has awarded £11.3 million to 25 Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) in England and Wales, to go towards domestic abuse intervention programmes.

The programmes focus on interventions encouraging behaviour change to help stop perpetrators from committing domestic abuse, with the ultimate aim of preventing further crimes from being committed.

Funding will also focus on key areas such as stalking prevention and supporting adolescent perpetrators.

🔗 Please access the news article [here](#)

POLICE DEMAND

Federation calls for urgent action to tackle underfunded mental health services

National chair John Apter spoke out after figures obtained by the BBC through a Freedom of Information request showed that up to 4,500 people in mental health crisis were unlawfully held in police custody during the course of a single year.

The figures emerged from a report commissioned by Theresa May's government and given to ministers in 2018.

Mr Apter said: "It is deeply frustrating to see more headlines revealing members of the public in mental health crisis are being kept in police cells when they absolutely shouldn't be as they are patients – not prisoners.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

'There should be a public outcry' over levels of young Black and Asian stab victims, says PCC Festus Akinbusoye

Policing Insight Publisher Bernard Rix's Policing Friendship Tour recently caught up with Bedfordshire Police and Crime Commissioner Festus Akinbusoye, to walk and talk about the policing challenges facing the county including the disproportionality in the number of Black and Asian stabbing victims and offenders, the importance of stop and search – done properly and lawfully – and the task of tackling county lines drugs.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

Visit every burglary victim, ministers tell police forces

Ministers want an officer sent to the scene of every burglary to boost public confidence in the police.

Senior government sources said that this would significantly reduce burglaries because officers would be able to build a picture of offenders' trends and tactics and take preventive action.

By visiting every victim they would also be able to spot safety lapses. Half of all burglaries happen because a householder has left a window or door open.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

Surge in young criminals serving life sentences as gangs seek to 'overkill' their rivals

The number of young criminals serving life sentences has increased by more than 50 per cent in under a decade amid rising youth violence.

Ministry of Justice (MoJ) data show the number of criminals aged 25 or younger sentenced to life with a tariff of at least 15 years in jail rose from 917 to 1,394 between 2013 and 2020, an increase of 52 per cent.

That means that in just seven years, almost 500 more young men and women have been sentenced to at least a decade and a half in prison, according to the figures obtained under Freedom of Information laws by criminologists at Royal Holloway and Cambridge University.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

POLICE GENERAL

Female PCs might have survived Dale Cregan ambush if both had Tasers, says police chief

Two female PCs murdered in a gun and grenade ambush might have survived if they had both been issued Tasers, according to the chief constable who became the first to give the weapon to every frontline officer.

Nick Adderley, now the chief of Northamptonshire police, was in command of police constables Nicola Hughes and Fiona Bone when they were killed by the wanted gangster Dale Cregan.

 Please access the news article [here](#)

Surrey rejects PCC's criticism of "divisive" LGBT rights group

Stonewall is a LGBT rights charity that a number of police forces subscribe to receive guidance on issues around diversity.

But one force's PCC has publicly criticised Stonewall's support of the right of transgender women to access female only spaces, calling it a "dangerous ideology that threatens the safety of our women and girls".

Surrey's Police and Crime Commissioner Lisa Townsend told the Daily Mail: "Stonewall, which has drifted so far from its original mission is now a threat to women and risks putting feminism back 50 years.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

Campaign will target middle-class drug users

Middle-class drug users need to "connect themselves with the violence" of the drugs trade, the policing minister has said.

Kit Malthouse said that a new government strategy to crack down on illegal drug use will target recreational users to "illustrate the impact" of their demand for Class A substances, such as cocaine, LSD and ecstasy.

The strategy to be published in the autumn will seek to change the "perceived acceptability" of taking drugs.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

Consult on damages for crime victims with convictions, court tells government

The public should be consulted on whether crime victims should be barred from getting compensation if they have an unspent conviction, judges say.

The High Court ruling against the justice secretary follows a legal challenge by a woman who was sexually abused aged eight but denied damages.

Kim Mitchell, who committed a minor public order offence 30 years later, waived her anonymity and said the rule was unfair and needed to be changed.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

Home Office 'relaxes' conditions attached to S60 stop and search

Conditions attached to the use of Section 60 stop and search powers which were introduced by Theresa May in 2014 when she was Home Secretary have been scrapped by the current government.

www.paccts.org.uk
technicalsupportteam@somerset.gov.uk

The best use of stop and search scheme was announced by Mrs May in her statement to Parliament on 30 April 2014.

The scheme for participating forces introduced a number of measures designed to create greater transparency, accountability and community involvement in the use of stop and search powers.

Following the announcement in Boris Johnson's Beating Crime Plan on 27 July this year, the voluntary conditions relating to section 60 within this scheme are now no longer in place, the Home Office has confirmed.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

JUSTICE

'Confused' police are failing victims of domestic violence

Domestic abuse prosecutions have halved in three years and forces are failing to use measures designed to protect victims, watchdogs have said.

Women are subject to an "epidemic" of violence and abuse and officers are not seeking enough protection orders or ensuring that breaches are punished, HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), the Independent Office for Police Conduct and the College of Policing warned in a joint report.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

Sentences for violent and sexual crimes fall sharply in England and Wales

Average sentence lengths for violent and sexual offences in England and Wales fell steeply last year as the Covid pandemic also led to a huge slowdown in the number of people dealt with by the criminal justice system.

The average custodial sentence length for violent crimes fell by 22% to 18.5 months and the figure for sexual offences fell by 12% to 52 months, the lowest figure since 2011, according to official figures.

Sentence lengths fell in all categories, except for public order offences and "miscellaneous crimes against society", which both increased slightly.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

Rape victims face postcode lottery in the fight for justice

The prospect of rape victims getting justice is half as likely in some regions compared with others, analysis of statistics shows. Victims of rape also have to wait twice as long for a prosecution in some counties.

The 94.4 per cent rape conviction rate in Gloucestershire is the highest in England and Wales. In Warwickshire, a neighbouring county, the proportion of convictions is 46.7 per cent, the lowest rate.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

TECHNOLOGY

'Paradigm shift' in digital investigation as MPS announces new collaboration

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is to transform the way it deals with crimes involving computers, smartphones and other devices after announcing a collaboration deal with a major developer of digital investigation software.

The force has teamed up with Magnet Forensics, a developer of digital investigation software, which has created a new product that can speed up digital and data analysis investigations by a factor of three and enable non-technical investigators to take on more cases.

The rapid proliferation of digital devices and data relevant to investigations has put pressure on police agencies worldwide, creating backlogs in digital forensics labs, delaying cases and putting justice at risk. The highly technical nature of traditional digital forensics tools limits collaboration between digital forensic examiners and non-technical investigators, who have the full context of cases.

 Please access the news article [here](#).

PRISONS

Manchester attack plotter Hashem Abedi refusing to participate in prison deradicalisation programme

ITV News understands that Hashem Abedi, the Manchester Arena bomb plotter, is refusing to cooperate with a deradicalisation programme in prison - and is being held at a Separation Centre away from other inmates over concerns he could radicalise other prisoners.

Our cameras were given unprecedented access to HMP Frankland in County Durham and HMP Full Sutton near York where Abedi and some of the country's most dangerous criminals are being held.

The Separation Centre at HMP Frankland, where Abedi is an inmate, is reserved for the most radical terrorists - a 'prison within a prison'. It has never been seen before on camera until now.

 Please access the news article [here](#)

FIRE

Councils reject APCC call to take over fire services

Councils will "strongly oppose" any proposals for Police and Crime Commissioners to take control of fire and rescue services. England's most powerful council leaders made clear they won't relinquish power or budgets to PCCs despite their claim to have government support.

The blunt warning came after the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners published a report arguing they were best-placed to improve services.

The report coincided with the start of a government consultation on oversight of fire services.

 Please access the news article [here](#)